

Woodlands Secondary School	Collective Worship Policy	
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Date	Review Date	Author	Nominated Governors
September 2023	September 2026	Sandra Clarke	N/A
Website	Statutory Policy	Source	Ratification Date
Yes	No	The Key for School Leaders	September 2023

Legal Requirement

Section 10 of the [Education \(Special Schools\) Regulations 1994](#) states:

Collective worship and religious education

10. Arrangements shall be made to secure that, so far as practicable, every pupil attending the school will attend daily collective worship and receive religious education, or will be withdrawn from attendance at such worship or from receiving such education, in accordance with the wishes of his parent.

There is no national guidance on what circumstances would mean this isn't practical.

The students who attend Woodlands Secondary School have a wide variety of needs and difficulties. We will provide opportunities for daily collective worship but no student will be forced to participate.

We have a separate policy for Religious Education.

Definition of collective worship

'Worship' is not defined in the legislation and in the absence of any such definition it should be taken to have its natural and ordinary meaning. That is, [it must in some sense reflect something special or separate from ordinary school activities](#) and [it should be concerned with reverence or veneration paid to a divine being or power](#). However, worship in schools will necessarily be of a different character from worship amongst a group with beliefs in common. The legislation reflects this difference in referring to 'collective worship' rather than 'corporate worship'.

Collective worship and assembly are distinct activities. Although they may take place as part of the same gathering, the difference between the two should be clear.

Collective worship opportunities will be provided on a daily basis and can be organised in a single class, a year group, a department or as a whole school.

Collective worship can, nevertheless, be related to the day to day life, aspirations and concerns of the school.

'Taking part' in collective worship implies more than simply passive attendance. It follows that an act of collective worship should be capable of eliciting a response from students, even though on a particular occasion some of the students may not feel able actively to identify with the act of worship.

Schools without a religious designation

Worship must be mainly Christian in character. You can reflect the religious backgrounds represented in your community as well, but the majority of the provision must still be "broadly Christian".

It shouldn't:

- Alienate students who don't come from Christian families
- Focus on one Christian denomination, for example, Catholicism

Woodlands Secondary School is not a faith school. We are proud to have a diverse student and staff population and believe this enriches our school community and provides rich opportunities to learn with, alongside and about each other.

Aims

By offering Collective Worship, students will have opportunities to:

- celebrate that which is of worth and experience a sense of belonging.
- have a time for sharing feelings (if they wish) and be listened to.
- celebrate diversity within a context that gives a sense of shared values and community.
- express and experience 'worship' in a way that is meaningful to them.
- come together and experience a time of quiet and reflection.

Organisation of Collective Worship

Each day in school, time is set aside to 'review and reflect', where the students (with the support of staff) share their experiences of the day. This may include opportunities for reflection, celebration, thanksgiving or quiet within class groups, where this is practicable as well as children expressing what they have enjoyed and staff celebrating children's achievements.

Collective worship at Woodlands Secondary School will offer time to focus on things that are special to us as individuals and as a community and will reinforce the work we embrace with our students in developing their social, emotional, spiritual and cultural well-being.

Students will be supported to engage in reflection according to their level of understanding.

At Woodlands Secondary School we recognise that worship can be experienced and expressed in a range of ways in addition to the spoken word. Music, song, art and interaction all play an important part in children's engagement with worship and are celebrated as both relevant and meaningful.

Assemblies and Collective Worship

Students are given the opportunity to join in a wider school assembly, on a fortnightly basis, which includes a collective act of worship within it.

Students in FE can choose whether they wish to attend whole school assemblies or not.

Assembly activities will include time to consider and celebrate aspects of the spiritual dimension of life, reflecting the varied beliefs and experiences of the school community. There may be some planned times to be quiet; time to listen, think and to reflect.

For our assemblies there is an identified, planned theme, which changes throughout the school year. The assembly is accompanied by music or other performing arts and led by an adult, supported by the school community where all students are encouraged to participate and engage.

There will be varying degrees of explicit or implicit reference to Christianity and assemblies also make reference to all other main faiths. The diversity of religious belief and practice amongst the students at Woodlands Secondary School will be represented in the act of collective worship and the community is expected and encouraged to be respectful, tolerant and inclusive.

Themes are carefully drawn up for each week of the school year. Wherever possible they have been linked with religious festivals and observance days. Sometimes an additional observance date has been included. Some assemblies cover topics that embrace values common to Christianity and the other world faiths, such as friendship, sharing and 'trying our best'.

Right to withdraw

If parents wish to withdraw their child they should write to the Head Teacher expressing their thoughts and concerns.

The Head Teacher will arrange to have a discussion with the parents.

References

DfE Guidance: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/collective-worship-in-schools>

The Key for School Leaders – Guidance on Collective worship

Review

The policy will be reviewed by the Headteacher every 3 years, or sooner if guidance changes.